

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the title to read as follows:

--IMAGE PROCESSING APPARATUS, IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD,  
PROGRAM AND RECORDING MEDIUM FOR GENERATING A DIFFERENCE IMAGE  
FROM A FIRST RADIOGRAPHIC IMAGE AND A SECOND RADIOGRAPHIC IMAGE--.

Supplemental to the amendments to the specification made in the April 20, 2007 Amendment, please replace the Summary of Invention section in paragraphs [0012] through [0016]with the following amended section:

-- The present invention has been made in light of the above-described problems, and accordingly, it is an object thereof to perform difference image display such that observation of change in individual shadows can be made in an easy and sure manner even in the event that changes in shadows are occurring at multiple locations, and also to allow judgment of observation of the process to be made in an easy and sure manner.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method and apparatus for generating consistent difference images even when generating difference images from negative and positive images intermingled, and particularly to provide a method and apparatus capable of outputting difference images with consistency in the display format of shadows on the difference image.

The foregoing objects are attained by providing an image processing method for generating a difference image from a first radiographic image and a second radiographic image,

the method comprising: a decision step, of deciding which one of a shadow increase region or a shadow decrease region of the difference image of the first radiographic image and the second radiographic image is to be displayed as a high-concentration region or a low-concentration region whether to display a shadow change region of the difference image as a negative image or a positive image; an image processing step, of changing the first radiographic image and/or the second radiographic image into [[the]] a negative image or [[the]] a positive image based on the decision of the decision step; and a computing step, of computing a difference image from the first radiographic image and the second radiographic image changed in the image processing step.

Further objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiments with reference to the attached drawings.--